IV. IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Presently amended) A vehicle bed liner apparatus, comprising:

a flexible walled container ~~flexible wall means~~ for containing a quantity of ballast liquid, wherein said flexible walled container ~~flexible wall means~~ includes a flexible top wall, a flexible bottom wall, and a ~~peripheral sealed region~~ seal extending along the periphery of said container between said top wall and said bottom wall,

a pair of compartment boundary members ~~means~~ located at ~~plural~~ internal non-peripheral regions between said flexible top wall and said flexible bottom wall, wherein said compartment boundary members ~~means~~ are in contact with said flexible top wall and said flexible bottom wall, wherein said compartment boundary members ~~means~~ define internal compartment boundaries, said pair of internal compartment members each terminating in a distal extremity spaced inwardly from said peripheral seal to define a passageway extending internally of said container common with said peripheral seal, ~~wherein said plural non peripheral compartment boundaries and plural internal non peripheral regions between said flexible top wall and said flexible bottom wall that are not in contact with said compartment boundaries~~ wherein said pair of compartment boundary members have an X-shaped appearance from above said flexible walled container, wherein said X-shaped said compartment boundary members define plural ballast

compartments internal to said ~~wall means~~ flexible walled container in communication with said passageway extending internally of said container common with said peripheral seal, and wherein said ballast compartments are in communication with each other through a central passageway defined by and extending between said pair of internal compartment boundary members, and

interior access valve means in said flexible walled container ~~means~~ for filling said ballast compartments with a ballast liquid and for emptying the ballast liquid from said ballast compartments.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein each of said flexible top wall and said flexible bottom wall includes a single-layer outer liner and a single-layer inner liner.

4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein each of said flexible top wall and said flexible bottom wall includes a double-layer, mesh-reinforced top outer liner and a single-layer inner liner.

5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said double-layer, mesh-reinforced top outer liner includes an inside flexible nylon mesh layer sandwiched between and a top layer of flexible vinyl liner material and a bottom layer of

flexible liner material.

6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said interior access valve means is a combination fill and drain valve.

7. (Presently amended) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said seal extending along the periphery of said container between said top wall and said bottom wall ~~compartment boundaries and said peripheral sealed region between said top wall and said bottom wall are~~ is formed by radio frequency (RF) welding between said top wall and said bottom wall.

8. (Canceled)

9. (Presently amended) A combined cargo support and ballast apparatus for a vehicle having a truck bed including a floor and opposed side walls defining a pair of opposed wheel wells, respectively, said apparatus comprising:

a flexible, hollow, substantially rectangular-shaped bladder, and

a valve assembly for admitting a ballast liquid into the hollow interior of said bladder, wherein said flexible, hollow, substantially rectangular-shaped bladder is suitably dimensioned to lie flat on said truck bed between said pair of opposed wheel wells, said flexible, hollow, substantially rectangular-shaped bladder being formed from a top wall and a

bottom wall sealed together along its peripheral edge, and wherein said flexible, hollow, substantially rectangular-shaped bladder has an X-shaped internal partition formed by welding together first portions of said top wall and said bottom wall to form a first half of said X-shaped internal partition, and by welding together second portions of said top wall and said bottom wall to form the second half of said X-shaped partition.

10. (Presently amended) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein said flexible, hollow, substantially rectangular-shaped bladder has a flexible top wall and a substantially coextensive flexible bottom wall and said flexible top wall and said flexible bottom wall are sealed together along their corresponding peripheral edges ~~hollow interior of said bladder includes baffles for compartmentalizing said liquid ballast therein~~.

11. (Original) The apparatus of claim 9 wherein said bladder is fabricated of material that expands upon the freezing of the ballast liquid contained therein.

12. (Original) The apparatus of claim 11 wherein said bladder has a top wall and a bottom wall, and at least said top wall of said bladder is covered by a protective layer.

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